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C O N F I D E N T I A L VIENNA 1088

FROM US REF MBFR

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET REP FEBRUARY 6

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF REPORT OF DISCUSSION OF CANADIAN REP AND
DEP REP WITH SOVIET REP KHLESTOV AND SOVIET DELEGATION MEMBER
KUTOVOI WHICH TOOK PLACE ON FEBRUARY 6, AS DISTRIBUTED TO AD
HOC GROUP ON FEBRUARY 7 BY CANADIAN DELEGATION. BEGIN TEXT:

CANADIAN REPRESENTATIVE AND DEPUTY REPRESENTATIVE MEETING
FEBRUARY 6 WITH SOVIET REPRESENTATIVE KHLESTOV (AT LATTER'S
REQUEST) AND KUTOVO AT CANADIAN EMBASSY.

1. THE ENTIRE THRUST OF KHLESTOV'S REMARKS WAS TO STATE
A NEED ON HIS PART TO HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE WEST'S
POSITION ON THE NON-INCLUSION OF WESTERN EUROPEAN FORCES IN
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REUDCTION AGREEMENTS FROM THE START, ALTHOUGH HE ONLY CAME

TO THIS POINT AFTER REPETEDLY ENQUIRING WHY CANADA COULD NOT BE MORE SPECIFIC ON ITS OWN INTENTIONS. (INCIDENTALLY HE MADE NO MENTION OF AIR FORCES OR NUCLEAR WEAPONS.) CANADINA REP REPLIED THAT THERE WAS NO SEPARATE CANADIAN POLICY ON MBFR. NATO'S POLICY WAS OUR POLICY.

2. HIS LINE OF QUESTIONING ON CANADINA POLICY WAS, IF THE REDUCTION PROPOSALS IN PLAY WOULD ONLY AFFECT A FEW HUNDRED SERVICE PERSONNEL, WHY COULD WE NOT INCLUDE OUR FORCES FROM THE BEGINNING. HE EXPRESSED RECOGNITION OF THE DIFFICULTY THAT WOULD BE CAUSED BY SINGLING OUT FRG FORCES BUT STATED HE COULD SEE NO SUCH FACTORS IN THE CASE OF CANADA. HE LATER MADE SIMILAR ENQUIRIES AS TO WHY BELGIUM, NETHERLANDS AND UK COULD NOT MAKE CLEARER STATEMENTS ON THE REDUCTION OF THEIR FORCES FROM THE BEGINNING. TO ALL THESE ENQUIRIES WE RESPONDED THAT ACCEPTANCE OF THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT IN THE FIRST PHASE AGREEMENT (FOR WHICH WE HAD EVEN PROVIDED AN ILLUSTRATIVE FIGURE) WAS THE CLEAR GUARANTEE OF FURTHER REDUCTIONS OF OTHER DIRECT PARTICIPANTS AND ITSELF PRECLUDED THE "UNCONTROLLED EXPANSION" BY FORCES OTHER THAN THE USA AND USSR (AND IN PARTICULAR THE BUNDESWEHR) WHICH KHLESTOV CLAIMED TO FEAR AFTER A FIRST PHASE AGREEMENT SUCH AS THE WEST HAS PROPOSED.

3. SOME OF KHLESTOV'S REMARKS SEEMED TO INDICATE AN EFFORT TO ELUCIDATE WHETHER SOME AGREED NATO POLICY MIGHT ALREADY EXIST ON THE INCLUSION (OR EXCLUSION) OF SPECIFIC DIRECT PARTICIPANTS IN A SECOND PHASE AGREEMENT. OUR REPLIES SEEMED TO SATISFY HIM THAT THIS WAS NOT SO AND THAT THE CONTENT OF THE SECOND PHASE WOULD DEPEND SIGNIFICANTLY ON THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST AGREEMENT. IN AN ASIDE IN RUSSIAN TO KUTOVOI HE SAID: "YOU SEE, THEY HAVE NOT YET WORKED IT OUT".

4. KUTOVOI POSED ONE QUESTION TO THE EFFECT, WOULD THE COMMENCEMENT OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST PHASE AGREEMENT AWAIT COMPLETION OF THE SECOND PHASE AGREEMENT? WE PARRIED THIS QUESTION BY STATING THAT THE DETAILED NATURE OF THE LINKAGE BETWEEN THE PHASES WAS A MATTER FOR FURTHER DISCUSSION AT A LATER POINT IN THE NEGOTIATIONS WITHIN THE COMMON CEILING CONCEPT. HOWEVER, WE ALSO RESPONDED THAT THE WESTERN SIDE ENVISAGED EARLY INITIATION OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE FIRST PHASE AGREEMENT ONCE IT HAD

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BEEN CONCLUDED.

5. AT ONE POINT KHLESTOV ACKNOWLEDGED THAT THERE WERE MANY FACTORS, SUCH AS INTERNAL WESTERN EUROPEAN RELATIONS AND DOMESTIC FACTORS IN INDIVIDUAL COUNTRIES WHICH COULD MITIGATE USSR CONCERNS ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY OF RADICAL READJUSTMENTS OF FORCE LEVELS BETWEEN THE COUNTRIES OF WESTERN EUROPE AFTER A FIRST PHASE AGREEMENT. HE NEVERTHELESS EMPHASIZED THAT A JURIDICAL

FORM WHICH WOULD PLACE LIMITS ON FUTURE NATIONAL CEILINGS OF WESTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES WAS A PRIME AND LEGITIMATE REQUIREMENT WHICH USSR WAS BEING ASKED TO SET ASIDE WHILE WEST OBTAINED ITS PRIORITY OBJECTIVE OF USA/USSR REDUCTIONS.

6. THIS LED TO AN EXCHANGE ON THE MEANING OF "MUTUAL" REDUCTIONS AND "POTENTIAL" PARTICIPANTS, AGREED IN THE EXPLORATORY STAGE, WHICH FOR KHLESTOV MEANT SIMULTANEOUS AND AB INITIO REDUCTIONS BY ALL 11 DIRECT PARTICIPANTS. WE POINTED OUT THAT THERE WAS NOTHING IN THE TERMS OF THESE COMMUNIQUE AGREEMENTS TO PRECLUDE THE PHASING WHICH WE HAD PROPOSED OR INDEED TO MAKE IT MANDATORY FOR ALL DIRECT PARTICIPANTS TO BECOME PARTIES TO ANY ENSUING AGREEMENTS.

7. WE THEN ASKED KHLESTOV, IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE, HOW THE WESTERN SIDE SHOULD INTERPRET PARAGRAPH 15 IN HIS PLENARY STATEMENT OF FEBRUARY 5 WHICH DID NOT INCLUDE THE TERMS "SIMULTANEOUS" OF "AB INITIO" IN THE ENQUIRY ABOUT THE INTENTIONS OF THE UK, FRG AND OTHER WESTERN EUROPEAN STATES. HE ANSWERED THAT IT SHOULD BE READ IN CLOSE CONJUNCTION WITH THE PRECEDING PARAGRAPH. WE DID NOT PURSUE THE POINT FURTHER BUT THE PASSAGE IN QUESTION, DOES NOT SEEM TO SATISFY THE POINT OF OUR QUESTION. FOR EASE OF REFERENCE THE PASSAGE FOLLOWS:

" IN THE USSR REPRESENTATIVE'S SPEECH OF 24 JANUARY IT WAS SAID THAT THE WITHDRAWAL OF AMERICAN AND SOVIET TROOPS WOULD CAUSE "LESS POLITICAL AND TECHNICAL PROBLEMS" THAN THE REDUCTION OF THE ARMED FORCES OF OTHER STATES WHICH ARE PARTICIPANTS IN FUTURE AGREEMENTS. WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND WHAT SPECIFIC PROBLEMS ARE CONCERNED HERE OR HOW ONE CAN CITE SOME POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES OR OTHER NOW, WHEN THE GROUP OF STATES WHOSE ARMED FORCES AND ARMAMENTS ARE TO BE SUBJECT TO REDUCTIONS WAS DETERMINED IN THE COURSE OF THE PREPARATORY TALKS."

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8 FINALLY ON HIS DEPARTURE, WE CHIDED KHLESTOV ON THE PRESS LEAK OF HIS LAST PLENARY STATEMENT STATING THAT WE SINCERELY HOPED THAT THIS DID NOT SIGNAL THE START OF A PRESS LEAK WAR CONTRARY TO OUR AGREEMENT AND LAUGHED OFF HIS CHARGE THAT THE WESTERN SIDE MUST HAVE BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR IT. KHLESTOV SPECIFICALLY DENIED THAT THE SOVIET DEL HAD BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR THE LEAK AND AT THE SAME TIME, MENTIONED A REUTER'S DESPATCH HE HAD READ A FEW DAYS AGO WHICH ALLEGEDLY QUOTED AMBASSADOR ROSE'S STATEMENT. END TEXT. HUMES

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